



RETROSUBURBIA

THE DOWNSHIFTER'S GUIDE TO A RESILIENT FUTURE

CHAPTER 30: REARING SELF-RELIANT AND RESILIENT CHILDREN

QUESTIONS:

- What is your favourite childhood memory? What does this say to you about child rearing?
- What did you like about your childhood? What didn't you like? How was your childhood different to the experience of your children (or other children you know)?
- What is your attitude towards risk with children? Where do you draw boundaries? Have you got examples of when this did or didn't work as you intended?
- Look at the list of dotpoints on p 455. Are there any you disagree with? Are there any that you agree with but have not done in raising your children – what stopped you?
- Look at the list of suggestions in 'Functional food habits' – do you agree with these? Why or why not? How does the list make you feel – guilty, indignant, relieved...?
- Are there any wild spaces left in your neighbourhood? Would you allow children to explore them?
- What is your attitude towards home education? Does anyone in the group have direct experience with this?
- How could your parents have handled your teenage years better?
- (for parents) Do you get any overt or implied criticism on your parenting style? How does this affect you? Do you have coping strategies? Do you have connections with other parents who share your values?
- (for parents) How good are your kids at cutting up vegetables? How about lighting a fire?
- (for parents) If your children are making a lot of noise are you more likely to send them outside or put them in front of a screen?

ACTIVITIES:

- Spend some time with a child or children you know and do at least one of these things:
 - get them to help you do something you do on a daily basis
 - walk or cycle to an outdoor space to explore; join in as you see fit
 - learn a new skill together
 - ask them their opinion on something that matters to them
- If you have children (or grandchildren/nieces/nephews) over the course of a few days record what percentage of their waking time is spent outside and/or in unstructured activities. Are you comfortable with the result? What changes could be made to increase time outside?
- Organise a 'kid share' system with likeminded parents to allow parents children-free time, and children to experience and appreciate other households.

